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ACTION: American Embassy NEW DELHI 1603

EYES ONLY AMBASSADOR

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Explaining Cuban situation to Indians will obviously pose problems.

In whatever ways Soviets may respond to our intended measures, Indian reaction to Cuba will doubtless have at least its usual influence on world

opinion. We suppose Nehru so preoccupied with Chinese attack that Cuba seems distant. Moreover, he likely bank heavily on Soviets to call off Chinese dogs, and therefore may be even more than ordinarily reluctant to take stand on other issues that would irritate Soviets. This in face of obvious importance of Indian government, press and public understanding clearly that Cuban crisis caused wholly by deliberate Soviet upsetting of delicate overall balance maintained in recent years by both sides, and not by U. S. reaction to this provocation.

While conclusion of MIG deal during present China border fighting might temporarily blind many Indians to any possible Soviet shortcomings, we doubt there much nourishment in Indian hopes that Soviets will or can get Chinese off India's back. Indeed, MIG deal with all its implications for Sino-Soviet relations would demonstrate bankruptcy Soviet influence in Peking. Indians may not realize how far rupture has gone. Soviet technicians in China withdrawn or greatly curtailed; military and economic assistance

Drafted by:

MA:PTalbot mr

10/21/62

Telegraphic transmission and

U. Alexis Johnson

Clearance:

Defense

Cleared in substance with ISA/Mr. Bundy

EUR - Mr. Davis (substance)

S/S - Mr. Furnas

G/PM - Mr. Kitchen

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assistance at least virtually cut off; consulates closed. Soviets pressing hard for repayment of assistance loans. Moscow and Peking engaged in open polemics on such subjects as Yugoslavia and disarmament, as well as differing sharply on India itself. With all this, Indians should not argue themselves into a pro-Soviet stand on Cuba on theory this will help get Soviet intercession with China.

We will keep you fully informed on Cuban developments, and count on your skill to put our story across to the Indians.

RUSK

END OF MESSAGE

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